



# **Beneath Your Perfect**

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## **Beneath Your Perfect** by **caspeter**

**Category:** IT (2017)

**Genre:** M/M, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder - PTSD, but also not soft at the same time, it's so soft, lowkey implied stan/bill but blink and you'll miss it, they all have PTSD but this is inside richie's head okay

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Bill Denbrough, Eddie Kaspbrak, Richie Tozier

**Relationships:** Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier

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**Summary:**

But that didn't matter either, because Eddie's fingers fit perfectly in his, and his eyelids were drooping shut for the first time in God knows how long.

It was the best Richie had slept in days.

In which Richie is more affected by the whole thing than he lets on, but Eddie can always tell.

## Beneath Your Perfect

### Author's Note:

ugh these two own my whole being atm fuck

Richie didn't really know what he'd expected the rest of the summer to be once they'd defeated It. He'd been looking forward to getting back to *finally* getting his street fighting training on at the goddamned arcade (hey, he'd killed a fucking clown, he damn well deserved it) and hanging out with the rest of the Losers – sans Bev, after she'd pissed off to wherever she was going.

It was weird, her being gone, and he actually kinda missed her presence, not that he'd ever say anything to that effect.

That was the least of his problems, anyway, because he soon found that his dreams of a perfect summer before heading back to the cesspool of bullies and bad memories they called school were far from the reality he was faced with.

Every time he closed his eyes – there *It* was. At first he hadn't really thought much of it, he was bound to be anxious and paranoid after some murderous alien thing hunted him and his closest friends down, right? And anyway, none of the other Losers had said anything about being pretty much traumatised, and he certainly wasn't gonna be the first. No freakin' way.

But there were times he wondered. Wondered if maybe – *just maybe* – the others were every bit as fucked up by the whole thing as he was. He saw how Mike flinched at any loud sound, and how Stan was attached to the hip of at least one of the boys – almost as if he were afraid of what might happen if he was on his own (again). He'd sometimes catch Ben tracing lightly over where he knew the *H* scar would be (Richie had actually said something, that time. Had spoken up in that loud, sarcastic voice he always plastered on and told Ben that it was, quote unquote, *fucking metal as fuck* and that *Bowers couldn't have taken that shit if he fuckin' tried*. It'd been a joke, as most of the things Richie said were, but it'd made the boy smile, so he figured he got the message across), and Stan would squeeze Bill's

hand just a *little bit* tighter when a little kid in a yellow raincoat would pass by, or that one time they'd all walked past a carnival and seen a clown handing out balloons to the delighted little kids.

So maybe they were all a little bit afraid. Maybe they were all a little bit scarred.

But then again, maybe he was just imagining things. Maybe he just didn't want to be the only one.

Bill's stuttering voice cut through the silence, pulling him from his train of thought. "R-Richie? Y-you good?" *No.* "Yup." He didn't honestly have the energy to bite back with a joke, and if Bill noticed it, he said nothing.

Most of the others had fallen asleep under the warmth of the sun ages ago, after Eddie had finally shut the fuck up about the germs and various insects that could be lurking in the grass. Richie only wished he could join them in what seemed like a peaceful sleep.

But how could he? He'd *tried*, but the minute he'd started to doze off, the chanting of *we all float down here* grew louder and louder and *louder* and **louder** and **louder** and then it was coupled with that clown's fucking laugh and he was going *insane* and it was just getting *louder* until he couldn't take it anymore, and his eyes flew open.

Thankfully none of the others had noticed it. There was an almost unspoken agreement that they wouldn't talk about It.

He waited a few more minutes for Bill to say something else, to question him further, but he didn't. Maybe Bill found it too awkward to say anything. He'd probably nodded off too. They'd never really been good with all that, the gooey stuff. There'd only really ever been sappy bullshit going on between any of them when it came to Bill losing Georgie, and they'd all cried like little girls then. Then again, a boy in his early teens losing his little brother and then being forced to shoot him in the head was enough to make a grown ass man cry, so toxic masculinity could go suck its own wang.

For whatever reason it was, Richie was honestly glad he wasn't questioned any further. He lolled his head to the right after a few

minutes so as to look at Eddie, who was sleeping so peacefully not too far from him.

*That* made him feel weird. Weirder than he already did, anyway. He couldn't help but remember when that psychotic clown motherfucker had been so *close* to Eddie, so close to killing him. Just remembering that filled him with a sense of dread heavier than he'd felt through most of all of this clown crap. He suddenly found himself itching to reach out and grab onto his hand – just to feel it's warmth, feel his best friend's pulse, a reminder that he was just asleep, he wasn't dead, he was just asleep.

He hadn't done that in forever, though. They'd grown out of that a while ago, when they'd started getting odd stares and realised that they'd suddenly become too old to be doing things like *that*.

But Eddie wasn't fucking *moving*, hadn't moved in a minute, the others were at least twitching or snoring (and maybe Richie was fantasising about clipping a peg over Mike's nose just to see what'd happen – sue him) and Richie could feel the irrational panic growing inside him. He *knew* all too well that Eddie was fine, he was taking a nap in the sun like any normal teenage boy would do after running around with his friends all day, but all Richie could think about was that *goddamn clown fucker*. And, after a few more restless moments of tossing and turning as the anxieties caused by the memories of what'd happened not too long ago clawed at his insides, he could only think *fuck it*, and he moved one arm, slowly, hesitantly, to rest his hand over Eddie's.

It was *warm*, and when he moved his thumb to stroke at his friend's palm, he could feel his pulse. He was fine, he was alive, and everything was okay. *It* was gone, and the panic flooded out of him just like that. The feeling of Eddie's pulse beating beneath his thumb was enough to ground him.

Eventually he decided he'd tempted fate enough, and, not willing to risk Eddie waking up, he moved to pull his arm away, satisfied in the comfort the small amount of contact had offered him.

Eddie shuffled slightly, and Richie cursed internally as his friend awoke, quickly moving his head back so he was staring up at the sky

instead of his best friend's face – even he would probably have a hard time talking his way out of that one. He'd gone and done it now, *way to be fucking weird as shit, Richie*.

"What're you doing?" Eddie's voice was barely anything more than a mumble as he pulled himself out of sleep. It was actually really fucking adorable.

Richie shoved away the part of him that had been anxious, that had been so scared and so goddamned *traumatised* (there was no other word for it – that psychotic *thing* had put him through the ringer) and pulled to the front the Richie his friends all knew and loved.

"Just checkin' ya didn't go kick the bucket on me, Eds." It was far from his *best* line, but it was true. He just hoped Eddie didn't realise how true it *was*, just how much seeing It about to kill him had really gotten into Richie's skull.

Clowns had been one of his bigger fears even *before* all this mess, but *now*?

"Don't call me that shit." Richie chuckled at the response, but Eddie's voice hadn't been the frustrated tone it usually was when he was telling Richie off for the nickname everyone knew he secretly loved. it was softer, quieter, and maybe that was to be attributed to just having been woken up, but maybe it just meant he understood.

Richie turned his head again after a minute of comfortable silence, and met Eddie's eyes staring back at him, soft and somehow understanding.

Without saying a word, Eddie moved an arm over to grab Richie's hand, intertwining their fingers, and Richie's heart leapt into his throat.

There were a hundred and one jokes Richie could've made, inappropriate one liners he could've stated, but suddenly, as everything except for Eddie and the sudden warmth spreading throughout his chest and the way Eddie was looking at him which was somewhat reminiscent of how Ben had looked at Bev (but that was something he could deal with later, because even though he'd always been told his crushes were meant to be for girls, how could

something that grounded him so easily be bad?) melted away, he couldn't find it in him to speak up, suddenly all too aware of just how tired he was.

Physically, mentally, emotionally, it all hit him at once. He hadn't noticed before, too preoccupied with being too *paranoid* to do anything other than make sure that It wasn't lurking around every corner. But now, none of that mattered, and he knew later, when he and his friends were at their own homes and he wasn't having this entirely *odd* moment with Eddie, he'd be feeling the weight of all of it again.

But that didn't matter either, because Eddie's fingers fit perfectly in his, and his eyelids were drooping shut for the first time in God knows how long.

It was the best Richie had slept in days.

**Author's Note:**

come cry over reddie with me or give me a prompt  
to write for these dipshits on twitter  
(@thedarkscrystal)